



## Still Life with Tornado

*By A.S. King*

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**A heartbreaking and mindbending story of a talented teenage artist's awakening to the brokenness of her family from critically acclaimed award-winner A.S. King.**

Sixteen-year-old Sarah can't draw. This is a problem, because as long as she can remember, she has "done the art." She thinks she's having an existential crisis. And she might be right; she does keep running into past and future versions of herself as she wanders the urban ruins of Philadelphia. Or maybe she's finally waking up to the tornado that is her family, the tornado that six years ago sent her once-beloved older brother flying across the country for a reason she can't quite recall. After decades of staying together "for the kids" and building a family on a foundation of lies and domestic violence, Sarah's parents have reached the end. Now Sarah must come to grips with years spent sleepwalking in the ruins of their toxic marriage. As Sarah herself often observes, nothing about her pain is remotely original—and yet it still hurts.

**Insightful, heartbreaking, and ultimately hopeful, this is a vivid portrait of abuse, survival, resurgence that will linger with readers long after the last page.**

*A New York Times* **2016 Notable Children's Book**

*A News & Observer* **Best Book of 2016**

*A Publishers Weekly* **Best Book of 2016**

*A School Library Journal* **Best Book of 2016**

*A Booklist* **Best Book of 2016**

### *Booklist* **Top of the List 2016**

**A Shelf Awareness Best Book of 2016**

*A BookPage* **Best Teen Book of 2016**

## A Bustle Top 30 YA Book of 2016

A Bank Street College **Best Children's Book of the Year**

“Read this book, whatever your age. You may find it’s the exact shape and size of the hole in your heart.”—*The New York Times*

“Surreal and thought-provoking.”—*People Magazine*

★ "A deeply moving, frank, and compassionate exploration of trauma and resilience, filled to the brim with incisive, grounded wisdom." —*Booklist*, starred review

★ "King writes with the confidence of a tightrope walker working without a net."—*Publishers Weekly*, starred review

★ "[King] blurs reality, truth, violence, emotion, creativity, and art in a show of respect for YA readers."—*Horn Book Magazine*, starred review

★ "King's brilliance, artistry, and originality as an author shine through in this thought-provoking work. [...] An unforgettable experience." *SLJ*, starred review

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## Still Life with Tornado By A.S. King Bibliography

- Rank: #65817 in Books
- Brand: A S King
- Published on: 2016-10-11
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- Number of items: 1
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- Binding: Hardcover
- 304 pages

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## Editorial Review

From School Library Journal

Gr 9 Up—At 16, Sarah is facing what she calls an "existential crisis," questioning whether her life has meaning or value, an event fueled by an unfair art show, a cruel teacher, a toxic and abusive family, a missing brother, and the loss of her ability to draw. Sarah wanders through the streets of Philadelphia and meets her future self at age 23 and 40 as well as her 10-year-old self. With the help of these past and future selves, she uncovers hidden memories of the vacation leading up to her brother leaving and the lies and violence that have driven her family dynamics for years. This beautifully written, often surreal narrative will make readers wonder if Sarah is schizophrenic, if she has post-traumatic stress disorder, or if she just needs to take a break from the realities of her life. Two weeks before Sarah's crisis, her friend Carmen drew a tornado and told Sarah that it was not a sketch of a tornado but of everything the tornado contained. This drawing becomes an analogy for all that Sarah is hiding in the emotional tornado of her life, the secrets she has hidden from herself and the world. King's brilliance, artistry, and originality as an author shine through in this thought-provoking work. Sarah's strength, fragility, and ability to survive resonate throughout. VERDICT This is a complex book that will not appeal to all readers, but for others it will be an unforgettable experience.—Janet Hilbun, University of North Texas, Denton

## Review

"Moving, unapologetically strange, skillfully constructed.... Read this book, whatever your age. You may find it's the exact shape and size of the hole in your heart."—*The New York Times*

"Fans of *Perks of Being a Wallflower* will love this powerful new release from award-winning A.S. King."—Buzzfeed

"Surreal and thought-provoking."—*People Magazine*

"You'll find *Still Life*'s exploration of an artist's inner strength particularly enriching."—*Teen Vogue*

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A Bank Street College **Best Children's Book of the Year**

NAIBA Young Adult Book of the Year Award Winner 2017

★ "King's brilliance, artistry, and originality as an author shine through in this thought-provoking work. [...] An unforgettable experience."—*SLJ*, starred review

★ "A deeply moving, frank, and compassionate exploration of trauma and resilience, filled to the brim with incisive, grounded wisdom."—*Booklist*, starred review

★ "The presentation of the surreal as real, the deeply thoughtful questions she poses, the way she empowers her teenage characters to change the trajectory of their lives—King writes with the confidence of a tightrope walker working without a net."—*Publishers Weekly*, starred review

★ "Lack of original ideas is *not* something found in work by A.S. King, who blurs reality, truth, violence, emotion, creativity, and art in a show of respect for YA readers."—*Horn Book Magazine*, starred review

★ "Books about abusive families generally follow the problem-novel script of recognition, admission, and solution; in her inimitable style, King takes a totally different tack, exploring (through interpolated sections from Sarah's mother as well as Sarah's narration) the way abuse warps and gnarls a family over time into a thorny growth of anger and denial that becomes a daily norm, even for members who aren't direct victims.... Readers won't have to live with abuse firsthand to recognize the taut, invisible coils of family dysfunction and the difficulty of gaining perspective on it, let alone breaking free."—*BCCB*, starred review

★ "King's ingeniously crafted, deeply engaging *Still Life with Tornado* will have readers by the collar the whole time."—Shelf Awareness, starred review

"King understands and writes teen anxieties like no other, resulting in difficult, resonant, compelling characters and stories."—*Kirkus*

"A.S. King is known for crafting deeply sympathetic portraits of teenagers in crisis, and *Still Life with Tornado* is no exception."—*BookPage*

"A.S. King has always brought her unique touch to her YA novels, but she may have outdone even herself in *Still Life with Tornado*."—*Bustle*

"The payoff is great. King's surreal elements are balanced as always by the lucidity of her prose, and her generous, unflagging faith in her readers' ability to keep up with her mental fireworks results yet again in a book that's truly singular."—B&N Teen, "Best YA Books of 2016"

"Though touched with magical realism, this is otherwise a wholly contemporary story about a girl who needs to come to terms with her family's toxic and painful history before she can start dreaming of the future."—Bookish: "Fall 2016's Unputdownable Contemporary Young Adult Books."

Praise for *Glory O'Brien's History of the Future* (2014)

"Maybe there are writers more adept than King at capturing the outrageous and outraged voice of teenagers,

but it's difficult to think of one." ?—*The New York Times*

Praise for *Reality Boy* (2013)

"Timely, incisive, compassionate. All of A.S. King's novels are must-reads." —Matthew Quick, *New York Times* bestselling author of *The Silver Linings Playbook* and *Forgive Me, Leonard Peacock*

#### About the Author

A.S. King is the award-winning author of eight acclaimed YA novels. Her novel *Please Ignore Vera Dietz* earned a 2011 Michael L. Printz Honor and *Ask The Passengers* won the 2013 Los Angeles Times Book Prize. *The New York Times* called her "one of the best YA writers working today." King lives with her family in Pennsylvania, where she returned after living on a farm and teaching adult literacy in Ireland for more than a decade. [www.as-king.com](http://www.as-king.com)

#### Users Review

##### From reader reviews:

##### Brian Wilson:

What do you concentrate on book? It is just for students since they're still students or the idea for all people in the world, what the best subject for that? Only you can be answered for that query above. Every person has different personality and hobby for each and every other. Don't to be forced someone or something that they don't need do that. You must know how great and important the book *Still Life with Tornado*. All type of book is it possible to see on many methods. You can look for the internet methods or other social media.

##### Debra Yarbrough:

As people who live in the actual modest era should be revise about what going on or details even knowledge to make these keep up with the era that is certainly always change and advance. Some of you maybe will certainly update themselves by examining books. It is a good choice for you personally but the problems coming to an individual is you don't know which you should start with. This *Still Life with Tornado* is our recommendation to make you keep up with the world. Why, because this book serves what you want and wish in this era.

##### Pamela Wilson:

This *Still Life with Tornado* is brand-new way for you who has intense curiosity to look for some information given it relief your hunger of information. Getting deeper you on it getting knowledge more you know otherwise you who still having tiny amount of digest in reading this *Still Life with Tornado* can be the light food for yourself because the information inside this specific book is easy to get by means of anyone. These books produce itself in the form which can be reachable by anyone, yep I mean in the e-book contact form. People who think that in e-book form make them feel drowsy even dizzy this e-book is the answer. So there is no in reading a guide especially this one. You can find actually looking for. It should be here for you. So , don't miss it! Just read this e-book variety for your better life along with knowledge.

**Vincent Humphreys:**

Many people said that they feel bored when they reading a guide. They are directly felt this when they get a half portions of the book. You can choose often the book Still Life with Tornado to make your own reading is interesting. Your own skill of reading expertise is developing when you such as reading. Try to choose very simple book to make you enjoy to study it and mingle the sensation about book and examining especially. It is to be initial opinion for you to like to open a book and study it. Beside that the reserve Still Life with Tornado can to be a newly purchased friend when you're feel alone and confuse using what must you're doing of this time.

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